

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 04546 130413Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
GSA-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 OMB-01 /059 W
-----037612 130417Z /20

P R 130242Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3516
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 4546

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EMIN, NC
SUBJECT: NEW CALEDONIAN COBALT SITUATION

REF: A) STATE 145925, B) CANBERRA A-098 (NOTAL), C) CANBERRA
A-110 (NOTAL)

1. REGIONAL RESOURCES ATTACHE (RRA) VISITED NEW CALEDONIA IN
MARCH 1978 AND FROM INFORMATION GATHERED ON VISIT TO LE
NICKEL-SLN, RRA CAN BE HELPFUL IN RESPONDING TO
REF A. THE LE NICKEL-SLN OPERATION AS REPORTED IN REF B AND
REF C CONTAINS INFORMATION ON THE NICKEL OPERATIONS IN NEW
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CALEDONIA, NOT ONLY LE NICKEL-SLN.

2. CONSUMPTION: NONE

3. STOCKS: NO STOCKPILING POLICY. ORDERS ARE FILLED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH CONTRACTUAL DEMANDS.

4. PRODUCTION: THE DONAIAMBO PLANT PRODUCES FERRO-NICKEL AND NICKEL MATTE. ANNUAL CAPACITY HAS BEEN AROUND 75,000 OF CONTAINED NICKEL. REFURBISHING OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT IS UNDERWAY AND BY 1980 PRODUCTION OF NICKEL CONTAINED IN MATTE AND FERRO-NICKEL COULD BE 90,000 TONNES PER YEAR.
THE INDICATIVE ANALYSIS OF SLN FERRO-NICKELS ARE:

FN1 (PERCENT) FN3 (PERCENT) FNC (PERCENT) FN4 (PERCENT)

NI 24 TO 30 22 TO 28 22 TO 28 22 TO 28

C 0.030 1.20 TO 1.80 1.20 TO 1.80 1.20 TO 1.90

SI 0.090 0.50 TO 2.00 0.50 TO 2.50 1.00 TO 3.00

S 0.030 0.030 0.060 0.230

NICKEL MATTE IS PRODUCED WITH THE FOLLOWING INDICATIVE ANALYSIS: NI-60 PERCENT, FE-25 PERCENT, C-1 TO 1.5 PERCENT, AND S-THE BALANCE.

THIS INTERMEDIATE PRODUCT THEN UNDERGOES SECONDARY REFINING IN A 20-TONNE CONVERTER, RESULTING IN INDUSTRIAL GRADE MATTE. THE TOTAL ANNUAL PRODUCTION CORRESPONDS TO 30,000 TONNES OF NICKEL CONTAINED.

5. PRICES: ONLY AVAILABLE PRICE INFORMATION HERE PERTAINS
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TO CONTAINED NICKEL, WHICH ALSO HAS COBALT AS A CONSTITUENT. WORLD PRICE IS RECEIVED FOR PRODUCT WITH ADJUSTMENTS AS REQUIRED BY VALUE OF FRENCH FRANC IN RELATION TO US DOLLAR. PRICE EX-LE HAVRE INCLUDES COST OF LOADING AND VALUE ADDED TAX. PRICES FOR SALES OUTSIDE THE METROPOLE ARE NEGOTIATED AT A LEVEL TO MEET THE COMPETITION HEAD ON, THEREFORE THESE PRICES VARY ACCORDING TO SUPPLY/DEMAND SITUATION.

6. GOVERNMENT POLICIES: NOT AWARE OF GOVT POLICIES RELATED TO NEW CLAEDONIAN COBALT.

7. COMPANY ALLOCATION POLICIES: SALES ARE MADE WHEN AND WHERE THEY CAN BE MADE.

SQUIRE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINING, COBALT, TRAVEL REPORTS, ATTACHES, STOCKPILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jun 1978
Decapton Date: 01 jan 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CANBER04546
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780246-0136
Format: TEL
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780667/aaaachg.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 826b498a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 145925, 78 CANBERRA A-98
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2379487
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW CALEDONIAN COBALT SITUATION
TAGS: EMIN, NC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/826b498a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014